

CLOSE UP

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AS IS

BY THE EDITOR

My first privilege this month is to make my bow before the greeting opposite, and to give greeting in return. We welcome Mr. Symon Gould, the Executive Director of the Film Arts Guild of New York, as New York Editor, and the Film Arts Guild as American and Canadian distributors of Close Up. This is an important move toward consolidation of the rapidly increasing band of pioneer fighters for the art of the cinema. We need more and more allies to fight at our side, and to ally the whole army, so to speak, of a continent, is certainly stimulus enough to make the faintest heart exult. Let me, then, take this moment to greet, from myself and from our European public, all new readers in America, who are allies, and (to speak episcopally) friends in a great cause.

Last month I discussed a letter from Pabst, in which he suggested ways and means to improvement of the film situation, offering a Napoleonic solution that a Universal Joint-Stock-Company (to use his word *Aktiengesellschaft*) should be formed of the one tenth of all the public which desires good films, each paying ten shillings, or two dollars fifty per year which would entitle them to see ten films during the year made by ten directors chosen by poll, in special theatres.

This *Aktiengesellschaft* was to be collected—sifted—from all corners of the earth, where its members are scattered “without voice or shelter”. But how to reach this vast public, lost and unsheltered in the swarming tens of millions to whom the words “film-art” mean no more than the fact that a handful of cranks are making ridiculous films of chimney pots, rhythms and meaningless patterns.

To the casual observer it would appear that this segregation of the cranks would lead to a complete schism between the two factors ; that the formation of a Company would mean an ever widening chasm between the mass of the public and the progressionists. That in catering for and ministering to their own aesthetic needs they would be instead of expanding the scope and dynamic power of the film, limiting it to the ultimate point of sterility, and therefore going backward instead of forward. It would seem that the cranks would defeat their own end not only by failure, but by antagonising the cinema public in general, by and through whom their very existence has been made possible.

This state of affairs clearly presupposes that the “handful

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of cranks" really *are* cranks whose aesthetic needs, and final ambitions mean vacantly wandering down a gentle Gada-rene slope. Their film art is bunk, their eclectic distinctions muddled and moribund.

- Is it therefore not plain that it is urgent, if only to dissipate this misconception, to form some sort of Aktiengesell shaft, some sort of organised, argumentative, tub-thumping vehicle to explain and show to all just what we all mean by film art, and just where we are and where we are not cranks ?

The idea of a schism is the first mistake. Such a division would not be in any sense a rejection, leaving the movie industry at large to founder in a sea of oafishness. The movie industry would not be where it is if it were as helpless and unseeing as that. The industrial side of the movies has its eye very much open. That is plain from the fact that it *is* where it is. And this wide open eye would be the first to see that the way to continued industrial success would be to keep a careful watch on any faction breaking away into new methods ; in other words to remain neutral through the battle and come in after the day's fray like a comfortable alderman taking advantage of the spoils of war. No commercial enterprise with the slightest integrity would fail to borrow any method, (tentatively at first, confiscating it afterwards freely if it worked) which had made some *reclame*, and over which there was no copyright.

This in itself has been evident enough in the case of the Little Theatre movement of America, which has done so much for the theatre there. By trying out entirely new methods its

influence has extended into the realms of rankest commerce. Equally this applies—and it will apply more and more—in the case of the Film Arts Guild, whose Cameo theatre in New York is always full to overflowing, and the influence of whose films has already been traceable in several recent Hollywood excursions.

Such institutions as this, and such a journal as *Close Up* are not founded to minister to a handful of idle, selfish intellectuals, to enclose them round and pamper them with gratification of their idle, selfish whims, but to make their way slowly and steadily into the public consciousness. They are, in fact, educators in the best and widest sense. They are not turning away from the masses (which are not to be thus despised), but a means to slowly raise the standard of that in which the masses still delight. Such benignity would be as bad as the pious interference of illiterate missionaries among competent and contented cannibals, except that we are not trying to force our beliefs on the unwilling, and but for the fact that whereas a missionary doesn't *have* to lead savages to God in order to survive, we have to make some sort of stand that decent film *may* do so.

For as I have said repeatedly, the fight to make good films becomes harder and harder, and may become too hard for the most determined protagonist if "something" (that vague and comforting generalization) isn't done. "Something", however, *is* being done. Much is being done. But we need swift power, and a means to ensure good films being made and shown. Sheer business, sheer commerce is hard headed

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and deals with established things. Therefore it will not experiment. It will take a chance on investment. It has to. It does that every time a film is made, every time a new star rises, every time an old star is told "where to get off at". But it manifestly wont, and shouldn't, plunge desperately into uncharted seas. Some of us have money invested in it, and we would be highly incensed if it did. Thus it is useless to look to sheer "business" to supply artistic and experimental progress. The creative function of business is business-not creation. Business makes its money from the successful exploitation of some commodity. Someone else has originally had to think out the commodity. That is what our job boils down to. We have to think out the commodity. If it is good enough we can be sure some business will develop out of it. In other words, if we create a lively interest in artistic, educational endeavour and development, if we stir things and people up, set up a high-tension current, "Business will develop out of it" !

If the advanced cinema groups in Europe and America were showing and advocating triste and barren examples of freakishness, there would be every reason to deplore their existence. But are they ? By no means. Turn to the list of recommended films at the back of this issue, and see whether every one is not a logical, straightforward and easily understandable story or document. Think of the kind of films that are shown at the little movie theatres : *Joyless Street*, *Bett und Sofa*, *La Tragedie de la Rue*, *Caligari*, *Berlin*, *Prince Achmed*, *Rien que les Heures*, *The Treasure*. Such

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films as these form the major portion of their programmes. There are, naturally, other excursions, five minute, ten minute, even twenty minute films of abstract and absolute pattern, Ruttman's *Absolute Operas*, for example, *Emak Bakia*, *Ballet Mechanique*. It is not supposed that these are for the masses. But we are entitled to them for ourselves if we want them without the necessity of apology, since we are expected even to be grateful for the millions of feet of shocking baltherdash which is the masses' corresponding indiscretion. Finally, in the little theatres, old fragments are revived usually to our trained perceptions, indescribably funny. How we enjoy them, how the masses would love them. We are not so far apart when all is said.

In fact, the kind of film we advocate is the kind of film that any normally intelligent person could understand. The straight, clear intention of *St. Petersburg*, *Jeanne Ney*, *Bett und Sofa* is not stylised and excrescent. These films are superb because they are true to life, because they say something we know, because they move us, because their beauty is a beauty we recognise, and their greatness a greatness we can comprehend. In a word they are concerned with practical problems in which you or I might be involved at any time. They have been made to express something, to point out something, not to go on exalting the smug complacency and falsity with which all film goes are wearily familiar.

In forming a society which made its own films, every possible means would be taken to extend its scope to the widest possible limits, and to draw into the fold more and more peo-

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ple daily. Would this mean countermanding, would this mean destroying the democracy of films ? Certainly not. As I say, commerce would be hot on our heels. Mr. Clifford Howard has pointed out in these pages that films like *Sunrise* and *White Gold* bridge the two extremes. They bring perception to a vast intermediate class to whom the stark uncompromise of *Mother* or *Joyless Street* would still be alien and not to be recognised. By such means as this perception can be trained. That is where the commercial film catering for the many million will form its link with the advanced film catering for the few million. It will take its cue and follow up. The commercial film will take from the advanced film, and in return the advanced film will benefit by the technical improvements and ways and means made possible by the vast incomes and opulence of the commercial film. Not mutual contempt, in short, but mutual esteem, No Gadarene slope but a house upon a rock.

In closing I will simply echo the invitation tendered in the greeting sent by Mr. Gould to all American readers who would care to have information concerning European films, or comments to make, to write to Close Up, which is entirely at their service, and anxious to give them what they want.

KENNETH MACPHERSON.

AN INTERVIEW : ANITA LOOS

Many telephone calls, many explanations, an appointment. We felt guilty as we waited in the hall (the London correspondent of *Close Up* and myself) knowing well enough how much we should resent ourselves having our few moments of privacy disturbed at an hour when work for the day should be over. But one does for the cinema what one will not do for one's self so we held firmly to our need of seeing Miss Loos if only for a few moments, partly because we wanted first hand information as to modern conditions in Hollywood and partly because Miss Loos being on the governing board of the Film Arts Guild, we hoped she might tell us about its programme and the trend of progress of the little cinema movement in the States. We wanted to meet Miss Loos herself but having very firm ideas on the subject of an authors' right to be private, we should not have ventured to insist upon an interview for merely selfish reasons.

The hall of an hotel always suggests some casual sequence in a movie. Boys passed with trays ; people chatted in a half dozen different languages. Outside the light was turning from dusk grey to deep blue. It was raining and cold gusts of wind broke into the room every time the door opened. London and Hollywood seemed very widely separated. I remembered the ceaseless shooting of movie scenes under

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stiff palms and children playing, only one path off, too accustomed to seeing cameras to be interested in them any more. And this "mixed" to the projection room at Neubabelsburg and the lash of surprise when the two lovers in *Jeanne Ney* walked through the rain toward each other. Cinematography taking not a step but a whole aeroplane flight with a single film. And now London and waiting. "Miss Loos, you know, was one of the movie pioneers."

We tried to sort our questions out into as concise a form as possible. And as we argued for the necessity of this or that, Miss Loos came suddenly upon us.

Forgetting all text books on "how to begin an interview" we both began if rather too quickly, with much eagerness.

"Won't you tell us, Miss Loos, something of the present condition of the cinema in Hollywood?"

"You cannot do anything in Hollywood now for if it costs five thousand dollars an hour to make a picture, no single person is going to take that responsibility."

Five thousand dollars is one thousand pounds. But how can expenses have been run up so tremendously?

"You see they have forced expenses up until nobody can go on. Vast studios exist and often fifty thousand feet of film are taken as a sort of rehearsal. They will photograph enough to make three full length pictures and then say "why, now we'll begin shooting." And that cannot go on. It is not real experiment. It is just chaos, lack of definite plan and wastage. THERE IS ONLY ONE HOPE FOR THE MOVIES AS AN ART AND THAT IS THE SMALL UNIT LEASING A CORNER

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OF A STUDIO AND MAKING INDIVIDUAL PICTURES. Pictures that are properly planned before they are begun. But Hollywood as it is at present can do nothing else but flop."

"Are there many small companies working now in America ?

"The hope there is in the quickies. The American meaning of the word, is, as it would indicate, a film rushed through in a few days by an independent company. Now one quickie called the BLOOD SHIP has been remarkably successful because it was a marvellous melodrama. It was made independently. But there is one thing that all my experience with the cinema has taught me and that is, that *you cannot keep a good picture down*. Not in the long run though it may have to wait for recognition. But until Americans follow the continental method of renting out studio space and making individual pictures we cannot expect to achieve much progress. But this is coming. It has on a small scale begun already."

"And are you interested in the cinema experiments of Europe, Miss Loos ?"

"The picture I have enjoyed most of recent months has been SHOOTING STARS. But they would not have that in Hollywood because the leading woman is not beautiful. But it is a fine and interesting picture."

The telephone rang. We realised that we must not over stay our time. (Is anything worse than landing in a foreign country and being asked to give concise statements on questions that require profound study ?) Between more calls we asked some necessary questions on the little cinema move-

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ment in the States and then as it was almost seven, rose to go.

One had the impression all the time of great vitality and wide interest and one wanted to ask a thousand questions... not strictly cinematographic. About New York, American literature, America's attitude to Europe. But these must wait for some other, less hurried opportunity. "May I tell *Close Up* readers, Miss Loos, that you feel the future is with the small film, made experimentally and individually."

"You may certainly say that as far as my personal opinion is concerned the only hope for the movies as an art is in the small individual company."

Taking into consideration the fact that Miss Loos has had a long and varied association with cinematography from its early beginnings, having, in her own words, "grown up with the movies", her opinion cannot but be encouraging to all workers for the art of films, whose efforts, so far, have tended completely toward the line of advancement indicated by Miss Loos. In addition to this, since, doubtless, most *Close Up* readers have a clear conception of how pictures should be made, or, more likely still, a picture in mind which they have never dared to think might ever be made because of present fabled costs of production, they will certainly find this final sentence full of promise of achievement

BRYHER.

ERIC VON STROHEIM

Eric von Stroheim is the cinema's stormy petrel. Like many another European genius cast amid the vagaries and confusion of Hollywood, he has led a troublous existence in movieland seeking to match artistic temperament against commercial calculations.

But with no other director has the clashing between art and business been so persistently pyrotechnic as in the case of this tempestuous versatile Austrian. A one-time military officer in the service of the imperial Franz Joseph, and subsequent dish-washer, gardener, hostler, and general down-and-outer in New York, he came to Hollywood some ten years ago looking for a job as a movie extra. And from that time on, as his irresistible dramatic talents bore him upward from extra to ace-director, he has been an outstanding, colorful figure in the cinema capital and the center of many a spectacular storm.

Individual temperament is no doubt responsible for much of the disturbance. It usually is in any case of chronic personal troubles. But another and important factor in the situation is Von Stroheim's type of work as an artist. All of his canvasses are large, bold, compelling—heroic in concept and execution. There is none of the genre quality in his pictures ; none of the simplicity, the directness, the



Mademoiselle Falconetti, who interprets the role of Joan of Arc in the film which Carl Dreyer is still occupied in making : *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*. Joan, in prison, returns to the habits of her infancy, and mechanically she has plaited a crown from the straw of her bed. Next month we will give a series of exclusive photos and an article on this film, which will be presented in Paris at the beginning of May.



Schinderhannes. Hans Stüwe, who plays the title-role in this Prometheus super-film. He should have a great future. His previous role was in *Feme*.



Fritz Rasp, in *Schinderhannes*, as Heinrich Benzel. He has earned himself the designation genius by his performance in *Jeanne Ney*.

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quiet subtlety that characterize the work of a Lubitsch or a Murnau.

And pictures of heroic size call for heroic drafts on a producer's pocketbook. Which means from the very outset a more than usual critical watchfulness and interference on the part of the business office. And the friction thus engendered between temperament and business comes inevitably to a volcanic climax when the artist, losing himself in his work extends his canvas to extravagant lengths beyond specifications and beyond all possibility of putting any but a fraction of it within the limits of the frame designed for it.

If making pictures in this improvident manner is a failing Von Stroheim possesses the failing in superlative measure. Yet in spite of it producers continue to be lured by his genius and by the glamor of his scenarios. Time and again, fully sensible of the risks involved, they have ventured their money on him, hoping for the best, but each time doomed to be drawn into stormy squabbles and tortured with forebodings as they have dug deeper and yet deeper into their pockets as the only apparent means of retrieving what has gone before.

Only in one instance has a producer had the hardihood to replace him in the midst of production. This was *The Merry Go-Round*. After several weeks of shooting, with as many weeks of trouble and the promise of many more to follow, Von Stroheim and the producer parted company, and another director (Rupert Julian) stepped in and completed the picture. Thanks to the fact that he had for his guide Von Stroheim's own carefully prepared continuity, as well as his

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already established portrayal of the characters of the story, Julian succeeded in completing the picture without any appreciable departure from Von Stroheim's characteristic screen technique.

His picture *Greed* is reported to have consisted originally of a hundred reels. He contended in defense of this enormous footage—and he has made the same defense with respect to every one of his productions—that he used no more film than was necessary for the proper and complete picturing of the story.

But who wants a picture twenty miles long, however meritorious or marvelous? A producer, interested only in profits, can scarcely be blamed for emitting howls of grief at having to foot the bills for a product so transcendently over size. And cutting it down to marketable length means additional tens of thousands of dollars in time and expert skill, to say nothing of the possibility of ruining the whole thing in the process.

Von Stroheim's latest creation, *The Wedding March*, which he began in June, 1926, and completed in February, 1927, has been more than a year in the cutting, with the task still unfinished at the present writing. This picture in its original form is fifty reels long. Von Stroheim himself admits it; and he states, moreover, that its production cost was \$1,125,000, which he claims is quite justifiable in view of the greater cost of other less worthy pictures by less gifted directors. Also, in further self defense, he calls attention to the fact that *Wings* was originally three hundred reels in length, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* two hundred.

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But cutting a Von Stroheim picture to commercial length presents a far more intricate and harassing problem than that involved in the cutting of other over-shot pictures. His scenes are so artfully interwoven and each is so integral a part of the story building, that they cannot be lifted in thousand-foot sequences, as in other more loosely built photoplays, without weakening or distorting the whole structure.

As a solution to the difficulty with the present photoplay, Von Stroheim undertook to edit the film in such manner as to make two distinct pictures of it ; one to be called *The Wedding March* and the other *The Honeymoon*. This he declares could have been accomplished with the shooting of only a few additional scenes, to round out the second picture. But before he had proceeded far toward this end, the Paramount (Lasky) Company, for whom the film was made, relieved him of the work of cutting and editing and turned it over to someone else, in the hope of hurrying it along.

This hope was not fulfilled, however, and the task was assigned to still another editor, who discarded the two-picture plan and who has thus far succeeded in condensing the original picture to twelve reels. And that is its status at the present time (February, 1928), with the possibility that it may be thus released.

Von Stroheim, however, wants it clearly understood— and he has published a statement to this effect—that he had absolutely nothing to do with the cutting, titling and editing of any version that may be shown to the public, and he positively refuses to assume any responsibility for it.

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And so has ended another chapter in the turbulent cinema career of the man who first excited public attention in early war pictures by his realistic portrayal of a German officer in the most despicable and villainous roles, and who later leaped into fame as a photodramatist and director with his *Blind Husbands*, to be followed with increasing distinction by *Foolish Wives*, *The Merry-Go-Round*, *Greed*, and his chef-d'œuvre, *The Merry Widow*, which, in its class, has never been equaled in mastery of direction and artistic unity.

CLIFFORD HOWARD.

“SOMETHING” MUST BE DONE !

A sinister influence behind every film that we are allowed to see, but we are only conscious of its presence in an indirect way through the failure of the film. The power of the censor, and how often we think it is the weakness of the director !

Not England alone, for we read of Mussolini's “Revisione” of the *Luther* controversy in Germany, while Clifford Howard has told us of the dreadful State censorship in America. Just at the present moment public attention is still focussed on *Dawn*, banned on political grounds ! Storms of indignation, and yet it is the soundest reason that can be found for any film to be denied a general release.

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Morality !

The usual attitude among more or less rational persons is that the censor is the last man in the world to decide which films shall be screened in our cinemas. He has, they argue, a depraved mind. He passes films which gild vice and make it appear a pleasant means of surrounding oneself with luxurious comforts, although I am sure that I should never be happy in one of those vast marble bathrooms. Whereas any films that show vice in its natural sordid colours are promptly suppressed. Indeed it has become a common jest to say, "Oh, yes it was banned, it wasn't naughty enough for the censor."

And how far is this true ?

I will answer you with truth and you may judge for yourself.

A perfectly harmless and pleasant film included a bedroom scene, but the sort of bedroom scene that you expect in such a picture. The legitimate daughter of a respectably married couple is about to elope. Her father wakes up in the night, hears suspicious noises and rouses his wife—That's all !

What could the censor object to ? A shot of the aged parents in bed ! We may see close-ups of keys being turned in locks, which tell their own tale. We may have stories about the misfortunes of beautiful mannequins. We may even see *Lya De Putti* attempting to discover in seven reels which of three men seduced her in a dark room. But we may not see a picture of husband and wife sharing the same bed.

And why did the censor object ? Because he said that

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although the artists in this scene purported to be middle-aged, the audience knew that they were really a young couple cleverly made up !

It took a censor to think of that ! If the characters had not been married, or if it had been suggested in an unpleasant manner, I have no doubt that it would have found official favour. Think of some of the objectionable and vulgar things you have seen in films !

First indictment ; that the censor is a gentleman who likes highly seasoned American lubrications.

Second, that the censor is a gentleman who has a supreme disrespect for the public intelligence.

Dramatic point was taken from *The Fake* because the censor feared that the public might be influenced to get rid of a few superfluous relatives if it saw Henry Edwards calmly turning the pages of a book while Miles Mander, the drug-taker and dipsomaniac, took poison. I suppose all England would turn red if it were allowed to see *Potemkin* !

I believe that the censor's complete contempt of our mental development must be due to the fact that he is himself childishly illogical.

A reliable story is going round the film world. A film was being made in which a prostitute played a leading part. She entices the hero to her rooms. (In the language of the film world the poor man is "vamped"). There is no question about the lady being a whore, no fuss. Various incidents in the early part of the story make this quite clear. Definitely the man goes to her rooms, definitely he stays the night.

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"Now we are on dangerous ground," says the producer, "we will make two versions ; one for the Continent and one for England."

The Continental audience are permitted to see the girl wake up, drowsily pat the pillow by her side, and discover that her client has left in a hurry without saying "good-bye." England sees the girl wake up and discover that the gentleman has left in the early hours by looking at the arm-chair !

Now there has been no glossing over the girl's profession. So the censor expects the nice English public to think that the hero has gone to her rooms to snatch a quiet night's rest in her arm-chair.

If we are allowed the prostitute, why not the bed ? If we are not permitted the bed, why the prostitute ?

It really seems a fearful tangle, the only clear thing is that something must be done about our system of censorship.

O. B.

COMBINAISON

LE FILM ET LA SCÈNE

« L'heure est venue d'un genre de drame nouveau. Le poète est encore à trouver, mais nous avons la méthode. Nouvelle Dramaturgie ! Mal appliquée elle ne sera que Mélo, mais si

elle est comprise, alors ce sera de l'Art ! Poètes, debout ! » Ainsi s'exprime le critique Bernhard Diebold, de la Frankfurter Zeitung, au début de son « Essai critique » dans l'édition du matin du journal mentionné, du 20 Nov. 1927.

Il n'est pas du tout dans mes vues de me rallier aux hymnes de louange adressées à la Résurrection de Piskator et je ne critiquerai pas non plus dans ces lignes les drames de Piskator ; mon objectif est bien plutôt d'examiner de plus près la question d'une combinaison possible entre le Film et la Scène, cette tentative présentant un intérêt certain qui fait l'objet actuellement de continuelles recherches. Lorsque le régisseur Erwin Piskator inaugura, le 9 novembre 1927, la scène du nouveau théâtre Piskator, à la Nollendorf Platz à Berlin, dans l'ancien théâtre Nollendorf, par « Hoppla wir leben » d'Ernest Toller, on négligea d'inviter la presse cinématographique. Toutefois l'apparition du film en scène suscita un intérêt très légitime dans les milieux du cinéma. La presse du film passa le fait plus ou moins sous silence et laissa aux journalistes ordinaires le soin de s'ébattre sur la question et de disputer « pour » ou « contre » Piskator.

Le Film et la Scène ! Deux modes d'expression séparés de tous temps par leurs propriétés caractéristiques particulières furent pour la première fois ingénieusement fondus en un seul tout. Voilà sans doute une idée qui ne manque pas d'originalité. Mais était-ce là une intuition purement artistique ou seulement de politique pratique ?

L'idée d'une combinaison entre le Film et la Scène n'est

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cependant pas nouvelle pour Piskator, car en 1925 déjà, au Grand Théâtre, à la mise en scène de « Trotz alledem » il eut recours au film en dernière ressource pour se soustraire à une contrainte passagère et souligner les paroles de la scène. La projection du film eut lieu sur une paroi blanche située au-dessous de la scène. Lorsque, plus tard, l'on représenta au Théâtre Populaire le « Drapeau » de Plaquet, on se dit alors : Que fait donc Piskator ? Il comble les lacunes du discours avec le film. Nous vîmes à nouveau la paroi blanche à côté de la scène ! Il obtint, cette fois encore, un vif succès ! C'est ce succès sans doute qui l'induisit à renouveler sa tentative sur un plan plus grandiose, et voilà pourquoi nous le retrouvons maintenant à la Nollendorf Platz !

A moins que ce ne soit aussi l'impotence des dramatises modernes qui aient favorisé la poursuite de ses plans !

Voici « Hoppla wir leben » de Toller. L'ouvrier Thomas attend, avec d'autres révolutionnaires, la sentence de mort qui doit les condamner. Mais sa peine est commuée au dernier moment en détention perpétuelle dans une maison d'aliénés. Il ne passe que 8 ans cependant dans sa cellule et en sort pour se retrouver, après la révolution, dans un monde complètement modifié. Il reconnaît, en la personne d'un Ministre, l'un de ses anciens camarades jugé avec lui. Condamné à nouveau, il se pend dans sa prison.

8 ans, c'est long ! Guerre, Inflation, Occupation de la Ruhr, tout cela est à décrire et passer en revue. Comment y parvenir ? Voilà, Piskator a recours au film. Il projette cette fois les épisodes cinématographiques sur un mince voile de gaze dis-

posé devant la scène. Lorsque le film est terminé, l'on voit réapparaître l'acteur derrière le voile !

L'action théâtrale nous place dans un local de vote et tout aussitôt le film vient, fulgurant, nous montrer les mille batailles des élections et leurs extravagances ! Sur la scène, c'est un bruyant flot de paroles et de démonstrations, et — entre deux discours, apparaissent en grosses majuscules les dernières nouvelles du Berliner Zeitung. Et tout ceci est lié au texte de la pièce qui se joue sur la scène ! Quel affreux méli-mélo dadaïste ne provoquant rien moins que l'anarchie dans notre esprit ! La scène représente une prison ! Les pas des prisonniers résonnent comme une cadence funèbre, tandis que l'on voit, derrière ou devant la scène, quelques photographies de fantômes personnifiés par des sentinelles en patrouille démesurément grossies. En vérité, notre œil ne s'accoutume pas du premier coup à ce chaos !

Piskator réfléchit instantanément sur l'écran les impressions suggérées par les mots prononcés sur la scène, il tient visiblement à épargner toute réflexion à notre cerveau, en projetant la représentation que nous nous faisons intérieurement des choses à l'ouïe des mots, dans sa mise en scène. Voilà comment Piskator s'entend à harmoniser et à concilier les deux rivaux : Scène et Cinéma. Il incorpore pour ainsi dire, sans hésiter, le film comme partie constituante importante du drame. Le discours, le texte de la pièce est rendu en quelque sorte, optique. Il parle à l'œil par la mimique, le son, et la mise en scène. La parole, avec le texte du film, composent l'association optique. Le mot même devient optique. Le désir de Piskator

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semble être de remplacer les scènes intermédiaires d'un dialogue par le film. L'effet produit est toutefois l'inverse ! Le dialogue tourne à l'intermède. Le mot perd son essence, il n'est plus la base de l'échafaudage des pensées, mais uniquement le support technique T. de l'idée.

Diebold se demande alors si l'image plate du film se concilie avec l'espace de la scène. Ce à quoi il répond : « Oui, lorsque le film est projeté, comme le fait Piskator, et qu'il s'échappe de cet espace en le remplissant. »

Certes, il a raison en cela ! Voyons maintenant la deuxième pièce de Piskator : « Raspoutine — les Romanows, la guerre et le peuple en révolution. »

Ici le film joue un peu, par ses vastes visions populaires le rôle d'un chœur moderne ! La scène est aménagée en demi-globe géant sur lequel est élevée une plateforme. Ce demi-globe peut subir un mouvement de rotation, telle une tour cuirassée. Derrière le demi-globe, un arrière-plan très clair. Sur celui-ci, et au-dessus du demi-globe, le film laisse tomber ses flots d'images précipitées. Cette projection sur le globe est d'un effet fort curieux, d'une plastique tout à fait spéciale ! Devant la scène se trouve encore un voile de gaze transparent qui sert pour la projection des scènes importantes du film. Le demi-globe reçoit à son tour la projection de deux appareils, chacun braqué sur une de ses moitiés. A ce but, la bande imagée du film doit être fermée d'un tiers à la fenêtre de projection. Par ce procédé, Piskator nous fait voir, dans « Raspoutine » des acteurs personnifiant les directeurs de Krupp, de Creusot et Armstrong, sur la plateforme et la scène. Et l'on

peut aussi contempler simultanément des épisodes filmés de guerre, de la fabrication des munitions, et de la détresse des peuples, sur les deux moitiés du globe, et à l'arrière-plan de la scène. Puis, enfin, on nous montre sur les deux faces du globe, les commandants russes et français, et ceci en même temps que des visions de guerre, de cadavres, de combats aériens et d'assauts, sur les différentes surfaces où le film peut s'ébattre.

Une autre scène ! La tsarine est dans le Palais impérial avec sa suite, elle entend la Révolution, mais n'y peut cependant pas croire ! Tout à coup apparaissent sur l'écran de gaze des matelots furieux... révolutionnaires ! La tsarine demeure ferme cependant ! Mais le film veut suivre les faits. Voici une vision de l'exécution du tsar... et maintenant le cinéma a terminé son rôle important d'exposant.

Retournons à la question d'une liaison purement artistique entre le film et l'art théâtral. Dans les essais d'utilisation du film avec la scène, par Piskator, la pensée devient apparition et l'apparition se traduit en paroles ! C'est ainsi que la liaison est possible. Mais ces tentatives de Piskator ne sont-elles pas encore bien enfantines ? « Hoppla wir leben » et « Rasputin » ne sont avant tout qu'une sensation criarde de style moderne d'affiche !

Mais il parvient à ramener à une logique réelle les mille dissonances et confusions de ce système hybride et à les faire obéir à son idée maîtresse ! Mais voilà, une grosse question : L'essai de Piskator est une arme à deux tranchants. Est-ce du Mélo ? Est-ce de l'Art ? Tout ce qui existe entre les deux peut

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lui être appliqué. Et le poète Piskator doit-il forcément rester toujours un Bolchevik ? Non ! Car il doit chercher à donner à son idée toute l'ampleur qu'elle est susceptible de prendre ; il doit construire le schéma du drame moderne filmé et joué, en y apportant toutes les précisions techniques indispensables.

Sur tout ceci, Diebold s'exprime dans sa critique comme suit : « C'est ainsi que cela doit être. Mais ce n'est pas encore. Aucun homme compétent ne s'est encore préoccupé de cette question. Car la qualité requise à cet effet est bien exactement : un esprit de création poétique. En parlant de poésie, je ne pense pas tout d'abord à Stegan Georg mais à Kleist. Je n'ai pas en vue des sonnets, mais bien plutôt un discours épigrammique, laconique, de la sténophonie ! Les parties de discours sont encore beaucoup trop longues et s'attardent plus encore dans les détails que " l'Histoire du monde " de Plozen. Les hommes parlent selon la pauvreté d'élocution de Toller, ou le vocable trop fin de Tolstoï, conversation qui contraste fortement avec la tournure technique des scènes actuelles. Ce que la « Télégrammique » de Georg Kaiser veut obtenir en concentrant la langue, pourrait être appliqué à l'École de Piskator : expressions sentencieuses, épigrammiques, dialectiques. Les citations ne nous quittent plus ! Les scènes de « Raspoutine » n'ont pas à faire intervenir une narration de détail, néanmoins chaque partie du discours y constitue un capital trop lourd de mots. Le drame peut être esquissé, simplement, à l'avenir, mais il faudra que les traits de l'esquisse aient la portée propre de l'ensemble. On pourra emprunter partout le matériel

propre à ce but : Livres d'histoires — Mémoires — Communiqués de journaux et accidents divers journaliers en fourniront la matière complexe. On obtiendra de la sorte fantaisie et homogénéité des formes. Les drames de Molière eux-mêmes peuvent être rendus avec art par le vivifiant improvisateur italien. Il faut des fictions optiques aux drames, dans lesquels le poème constituera l'idée maîtresse et le film la représentation spirituelle visible. Régisseur et poète ne feront qu'un. Le poème doit servir puisqu'il ne peut régner. Mais le poète aura toujours la possibilité de surpasser le régisseur, dans la fantaisie et la technique.

E. HELLMUND-WALDOW.

THE END OF ST. PETERSBURG

Here is a new film by the Russian director Pudowkin, *The End of St. Petersburg*. Pudowkin conducts us across his country, the Russia of before the war. Interminable distances of countryside, vast fields, steppes and torrents carrying their loads of wood from the far off Ural near the sea : all this unfolds before our eyes. But we are shown too the wretchedness, the insupportable misery of the Russian people ! St. Petersburg appears on the screen with its innumerable towers, its churches, the fortress of Peter Paul, and the

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Winter Palace. St. Petersburg, capital of commerce and Russian industry. The bridge of the Imperial Palace crossing the Neva. Here too, stand the monuments of Peter the Great, and of Alexander the Third. And here too, the director shows us beside all this splendour and luxury, the wretched existence of the Russian working classes from the great factories of the multi-millionaire Ledebeff. We are shown the unhappy creatures hungry and defenceless.

The great magnate Ledebeff has received important orders from the State in anticipation of the forthcoming war, and these orders are to be executed with the utmost speed. It is essential to prolong the hours of the workers. They refuse and call a strike. The chief instigators are arrested. Ledebeff has them seized by the Cossacks. Rebellion seethes in the people. War !

Hostilities cause all at first to forget class difference. Each rises to defend his country.

We see the Russian front, the dead, the grievously wounded, and opposite, the German front, where the same ghastly sights are repeated. Reinforcements arrive ceaselessly, more and more condemned to death on both sides. A Russian soldier throws out the question "Why have we been here being murdered for three years ?"

Like a trail of gunpowder this question spreads down the whole front line, repeated from mouth to mouth. At first it was a simple question, it swiftly becomes an angry challenge. There is muttering in the ranks.

Again we see Ledebeff. St. Petersburg. Ledebeff sets

the fashion at the Exchange, where his activities in feeding the war are slowly increasing. The Russian aristocracy makes merry feasting.

And the people? In long, miserable queues they wait outside the provision shops, where there is not nearly enough for them. Bread, flour... there is no more. The people are starving.

The year 1917; with it the Revolution.

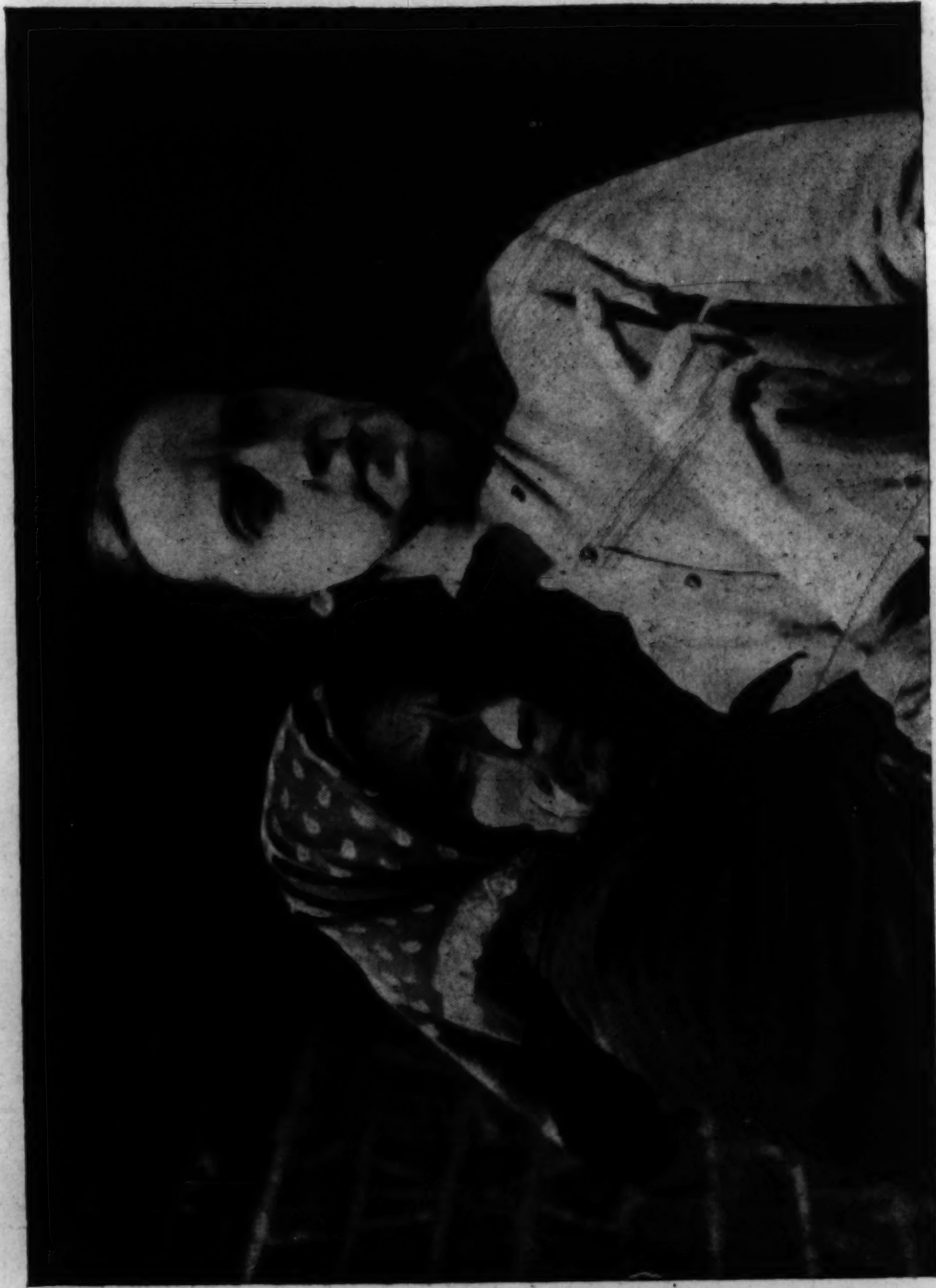
There is Kerenski in the salons of the Winter Palace!

The Russian intellectuals are supporting the revolution. To reinforce his position Ledebeff unities with Kerenski. The workers, however, press their demands.

But the temporary government will not concede, and the soldiers returning to their lines are challenged "Comrades, will you continue to shoot your brothers?"

The troops take their place beside the workers. Kerenski, however, refuses to hear them. The mob bombards the Winter Palace, where the temporary government is sheltered, and seizes the palace, crying "Long Live Leningrad!"

Pudowkin's film of the revolution is not in any way biassed, and constitutes a document of quite impartial interest. The force of the events exposed, and the tragic fall of Russian imperialism, make a tremendous impression on all who see the film. A film! One almost forgets one is in a cinema, for Pudowkin is gifted with a rare directorial talent. He achieves without any difficulty the illusion of reality which completely effaces all feeling of "représentation".



The End of St. Petersburg, the new sensational De-Ru-Fa film made by Pudcowkin (director of *The Mother*) for Meschrapom-Russ Productions. On right W. Barancowskaja, who plays a leading part. Her performance is marked by the same intensity as in *The Mother*.



J. Tschuwileff, who plays the leading part Pudowkin prefers actors who have never been before the camera. Tschuwileff is not an actor normally, but an accountant. Everything depends, says Pudowkin, on the perspicacity of the director.



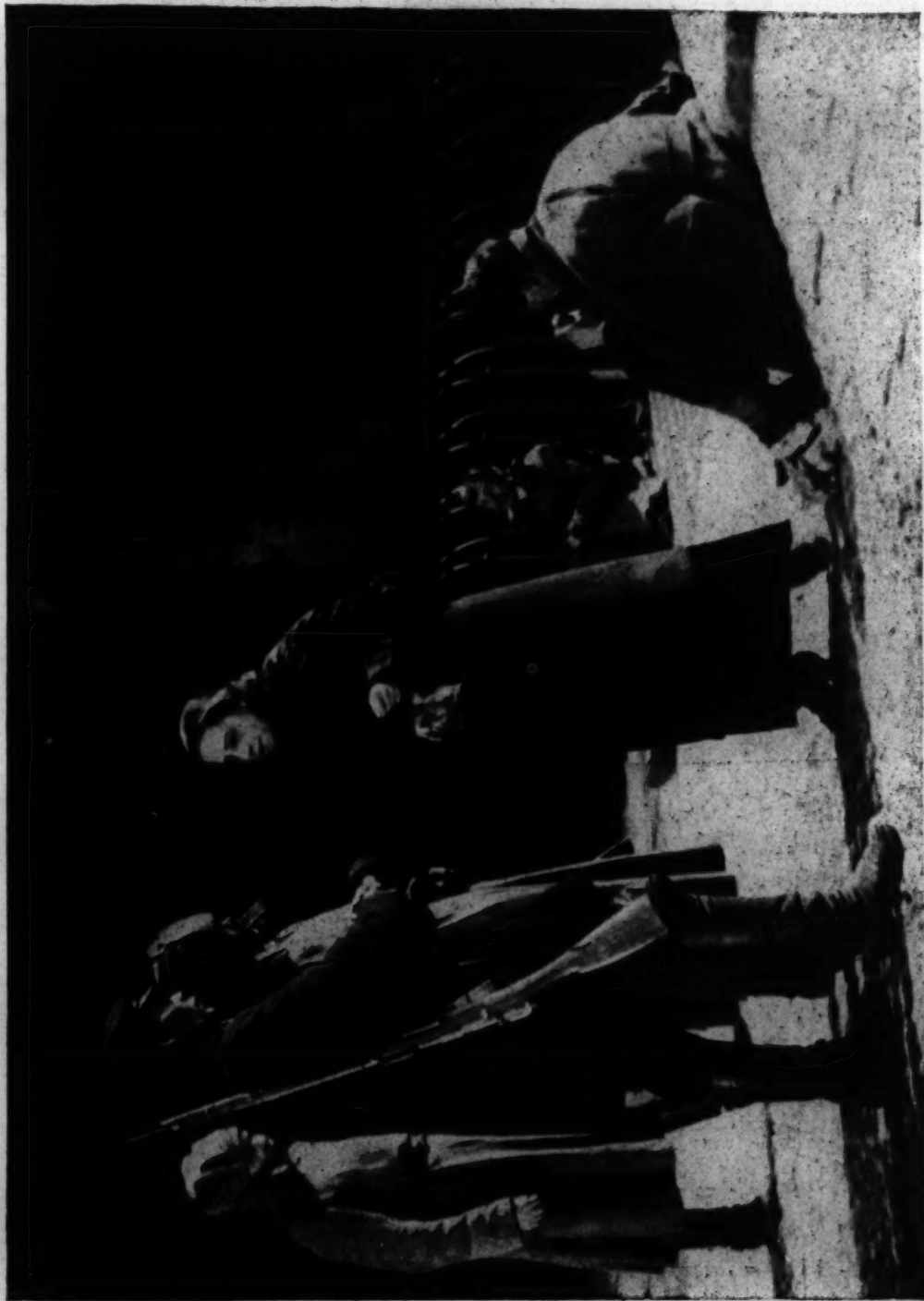
An effect as of sculptured bronze. "Our ambition", says Pudowkin, was to compel the spectator to recognise the hero in every Russian and German soldier, to make each live." He has certainly succeeded.



Ledebeff, the magnate, played by W. Oblensky. A splendid piece of acting.



Manhandled. It is unnecessary to state to which party this man belongs. Photography by Anatolij Golownia.



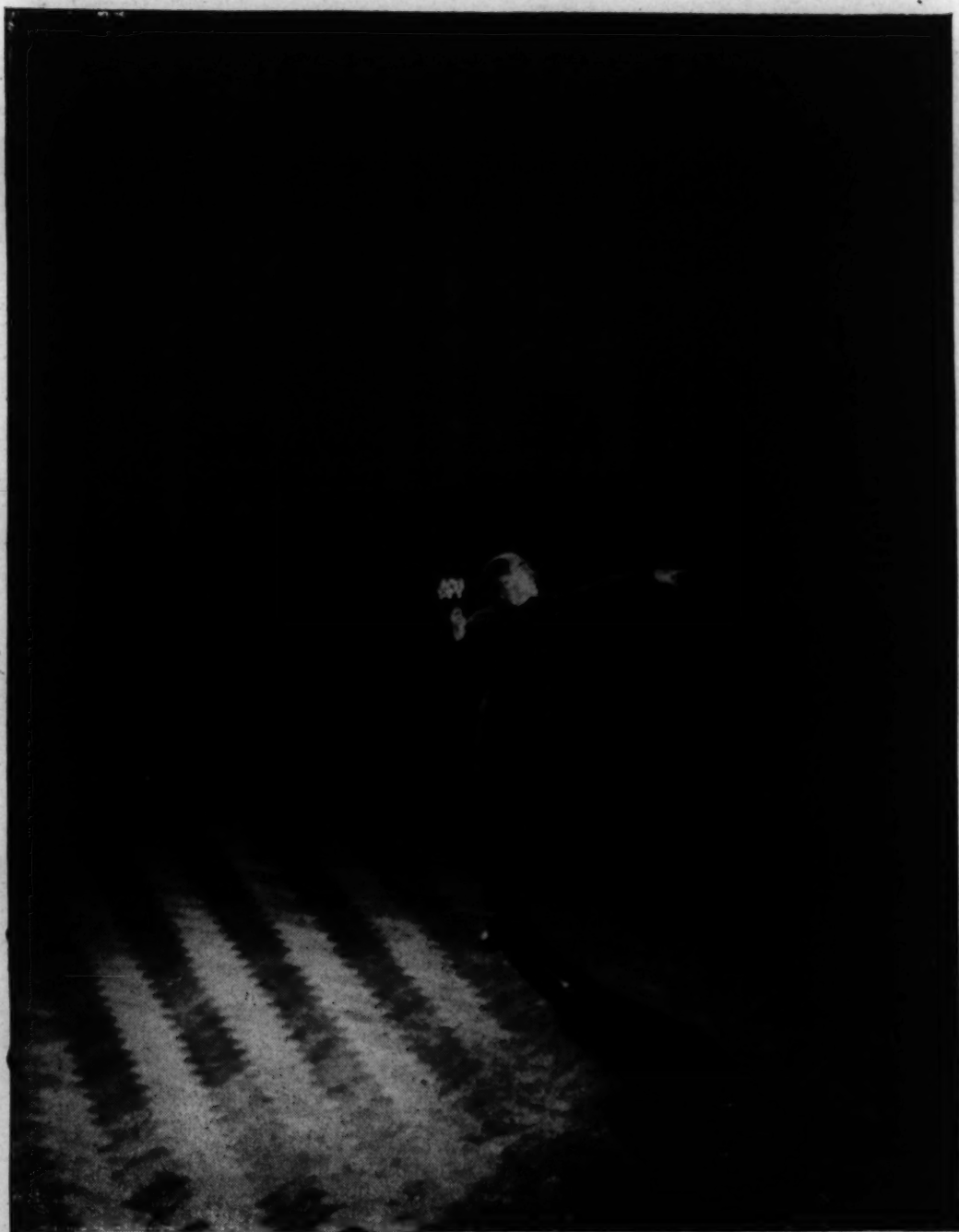
A scene from the outbreak of revolution. W. Baranowskaja, the working man's wife with the soldiers.



Inside the Winter Palace. A set minutely copied from the original.
Good lighting, and choice of camera position excellent.



Storming the Winter Palace. The overthrow of Imperialism.



A dramatic effect carrying a whole wealth of suggestion. It would be interesting to know what readers who have not seen the film would imagine, and what meaning they would read into this particular scene.



A shot that goes one better than any absolute. Suggesting that the place of the absolute is not
an end but a means to an end.

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Here we do not see scenes carefully prepared, or arrogant actors determined to "play" something in front of us, preoccupied with the notion of being pleasing to us! This film has the breath of life. It shows only fragments of sheer realism.

The following words of Pudowkin are illuminating:

"My film *The End of St. Petersburg* was conceived with a view to illustrate an entire epoch, the whole of an historic period of Russian development, namely the displacement of the tzarist regime by the World War, and the events of that significant October. It was clearly impossible to reproduce within the limits of a film all the various happenings which took place during this period of time. For this reason the group to whom I entrusted the task of production (Zarchi, the writer, Golownia the operator, the assistant Doller and myself) proceeded along different lines. First of all we were concerned with concentrating the events into a sort of film chronicle. But in taking into account the events we have not omitted the people who were to some extent their instigators. Indeed we were convinced it would be insufficient to show the activity of crowds, but that it was equally important to focus the interest on some principal person, a leading man whom the spectator would be at liberty to esteem or to abhor. On the other hand, it would not do to keep the public attention fixed on one personal fate, for then the course of outside events would be neglected. The film, therefore, takes account of all these considerations. Similar to the action of some such great literary work as say *War and Peace*, by Tolstoi, the

various episodes in *The End of St. Petersburg* show, step by step, the widespread movements and the fate of heroes of history. The beginning of the film deals with a broad conception of the opening action, and a representation, as exact as possible, of the various *milieux* where the events took place.

The immense countryside of Russia with its inhabitants, peasants bent beneath their labour. Then an impression, powerful and massive, of the Capital, where the noise of factories mixes with the clamour of the business centres ; this tableau ends with the presentation of Ledebef, central figure of industrial power. Finally, through these vast conceptions, appears the figure who plays the principal role : a young villager who comes to seek employment in the great town. The development of the film continues this judicious balance, as, for example, when in the fifth act are shown the war scenes on the Russian and German fronts, the principal of the film appears only twice. Our constant ambition was to compel the spectator in some way to recognise this person in every Russian and every German soldier, to make each live. Thanks to the unusual vastness of the theme, it was possible to give a new form to certain compositions which permitted us to condense briefly and reinforce certain scenes of crowds, or certain passages relating to some particular period. This is how the scenes are presented : Declarations of war, with the usual outburst of patriotism, morbid and violent ; famine, tumult, and an assault on the Winter Palace. Tremendous attention was given to the presentation of these scenes. I am always determined to obtain men who will convey the

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maximum of possible realism, scrapping no matter what scene where the play of the actors seems to me theatrical. I demand again and again, should not one in such films as this break down the barriers which separate the man in the street from the professional actor, when the former possesses the aptitude necessary to competently fill his role? It depends only on the perspicacity of a director to film a perfectly natural scene. That is why I recruited, in order to turn this film, men who had never before appeared in any film, and who had no connection with any theatrical enterprise. For example, the hero of the film, Tschuwileff, is an accountant by profession. His first appearance before the camera was in my film *Mutter* (The Mother). All the others, with the exception of Baranowskaja are neither film nor stage actors. They are workers, soldiers, in fact no matter what, all of whom my assistant Doller was occupied in collecting. I could talk at length on the proper technical means to bring constant variety into the manner of taking and showing a film. One of these methods has permitted me to project a mingling vision of the front and of the Exchange, and to each one the thing that specially attracts him,—his own particular rhythms. To determine an unique rhythm which is able to impress itself upon the spectator will be, in my opinion, the greatest task of the artistic film."

E. HELLMUND-WALDOW.

SO BLUE

We nearly didn't go. *La Folle Nuit* did not sound appealing, it was called "a tingling thriller of the New York night clubs", the photographs showed Monte Blue in tails and Patsy Ruth Miller in a blonde wig. We very nearly didn't go. It might be anything.

But there was nothing else on in the town. And Monte Blue can be good. And we felt movie, so we went ; it might be anything. It turned out to be *Wolf's Clothing*. It was beautifully lit. There were some scenes on the Metro as good in their way as the entry into the city in *Berlin* and *Bett und Sofa*, and a New Year sequence that was right. The photography was, again, beautiful, and over it all was the deftness that America is trying to lose, or hide. Blue and the Miller were the most delicate of surfaces. We realised we were watching a mind, lithe and alert, a mind that started where we started and gave form to what we hadn't given form. Not a mind that started back somewhere (that starting back they are calling fundamental) and tried laboriously to keep up, give us (though it didn't approve) every now and again what we wanted. We got Something. We went the next night ; something again. It is the story of a dream. One of those. You may see it as a pirate story, as a brilliantly-done farce, as an illustration of what happens when a

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railway porter tries to be *wirklich elegante* in tails. But you will get Something. I got. . .of course I get more than I should, apparently, always. . .still, I got. . . .

Opening scenes on the Metro, leading to Blue as a porter. He gets the night off to celebrate New Year's Eve. Coming up, dazzled by the lights, he is knocked down by a car. The driver picks him up, puts him in, drives off. He changes clothes and leaves him in the road. You are wondering what will happen. Blue is discovered, taken to the hotel whose key is found in his; the other man's, clothes. He comes to. He finds a rich ring on his finger, rich clothes round him. Here is his chance. He dresses and goes down to dance with Patsy Ruth, jewelled and sequinned. They dance long after every one else has stopped. Manifestation of inferiority, you say. Perhaps, but don't see more than there is. They sup. A detective enters. It would seem that the driver was an escaped lunatic, and Blue, in his clothes, is mistaken for him. The detective joins them as a friend of his father. Remember that word and note that from now on everything goes wrong with Blue. To begin with, he can't be alone with Patsy Ruth. Then the champagne is doped. Ambulance men bear all three off. But they are really crooks. Blue and the girl are flung, doped, onto a bed in a low sinister room, glaringly lit. Underworld ,blackmail. The crooks take a photo. Blue comes to. Everything is large and against him. The bed is as big as a tennis court, the telephone like Nelson's column. Blue ,a little figure, runs about, trying to get out. Clever use of diminution and slow-motion brings out the feel-

ing very well. And the director has an uncanny grip on coming-to. I may be seeing more than was intended, but surely I am justified, seeing as much as I can, when the dream is treated psychologically ? You have all drilled yourselves into not seeing all that is there, because things are not usually treated psychologically. The crooks show the compromising photo, and give Blue till 4 a. m. to find 40,000 dollars, to be delivered at quay 72. The girl will be in hostage on a boat. Off goes Blue. The detective is in a cellar of the house. He smashes a window and follows.

Back in his room at the hotel, Blue finds the lunatic (John Miljan) trying to rape a girl. In this extremity, Blue turns to ringing up more detectives. Lunatic escapes and Blue has to escape, too, pursued by more detectives. But he has seen and you have seen that the lunatic has *his* old ring on. Supposing the lunatic is an earlier self ? Supposing the lunatic is identified with him ? The ring the symbol. And the detective the father. Remember, the detective is after the lunatic ; father wants charge of son. But Blue, the son, is on an escapade with a girl.

Now follow Blue down the fire-escape, chasing the man. An umbrella is up in a doorway. Tear it down. Lunatic is behind it. Lunatic says, let me off I will give you the money you want. Blue is beginning to win. And he is on his own. — He drags lunatic into a milk-cart, and drives fantastically, wildly to the quay. Lunatic amuses himself by smashing the milk-bottles, wantonly spilling the milk. First detective following, is shot at by other detectives, who thus

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make him the culprit. More glass is smashed by these shots.

Arrived, Blue is rushed on board. Air of triumph he is no longer made to seem wrong. Produces the money lunatic gave him. It is only bits of newspaper. Lunatic-self laughs. It is useless. What he has given Blue is no good. No good to help the girl. Still, he won't be thwarted. Reaching up, he smashes the light, and runs on deck with the girl. First detective meanwhile arrives, falls into the hold, where is the lunatic. Where, he says, is the man I want? Out there, says lunatic, pointing through porthole. Detective-father opens it. Before, he would have smashed the glass. Now, at his son's intercession, he lets the water in. Above, Blue, the real son, has persuaded the captain to marry the girl and him. Simultaneously with the inrush of water. But the other detectives arrive, just as he is married. Blue is handcuffed. Yes, he is powerless. . . It is all his father's fault. And his earlier self's. Supposing it is some fault of his earlier self, inherited, shall we say, from his father? You needn't accept it, but just hold it on hand in your mind.

They are rushed off by train. Blue is still handcuffed, Miljan has his umbrella up. Put it down, says the detective. No, cries lunatic, see *he* is handcuffed. He leaps up, seizes the axe in case of fire, and rushes down the train. Hits the driver on the head. Jealous of the man who can drive this train through tunnels. Blue and all follow. They let Blue loose. Train hurtles on. Whizz-whizz, the lights. Blue climbs on roof, makes way against the wind. Detective breaks

glass again, while Blue has terrific fight with lunatic. This is thrilling ; one is by this time so fond of Blue. Finally, he breaks window of driving coach, pitches lunatic out and steers the train on. After a little more he wakes up wakes up fighting three doctors in the hospital where he had been taken after he was knocked down by the car. The nurse is Patsy Ruth Miller, the light the same as in the low-life bedroom. It was only a dream.

Say "it was only. . .", if you like. But it wasn't only an "only a dream" film. *If* you don't take it as a farce or a thriller, you will see it a piece of fine characterisation, expressed by means of psychology. See it several times. Watch the detective, remember the ring. Don't you see ? Your mind was stimulated quite out of proportion to the apparent significance of the story the first time. You don't like "only a dream" endings, you don't care about blackmail, crooks, farce. Why, then, why ? Because your sub-conscious got it the first time ; you will see it *all* the second. Here is *Something*. It isn't a psychological exposition, obviously built and obscurely unfolded. It's American, and gay and swift and sure.

I consider it quite an important film. I think it is better than *Jazz*. It goes further, it gets through, and it can please those who take it at its surface value, which *Jazz* couldn't do. The point of *Jazz* was that the dream was like a dream ; the point of *Wolfs' Clothing* was that the dream was like a life. It was more dimensional. I am not saying that *Jazz* wasn't good, but that it wasn't as good as *Wolf's Clothing*, which

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somehow hasn't got taken up. *Jazz* was a little amused by itself—and it had Esther Ralston. But it too was an American film. If, in Hollywood, they can make a film that pleases whoever you take to it, AND underneath has all this to please you and me, it is good. It is encouraging. Here is Something to praise. Something we want, something we wait for. We had had inhibited *Surrender*, conscientious *Panama*. There is *Sunrise*, *The Way Of All Flesh*, this and that, heavy super-productions. None of them gives us anything that hasn't been answered before. And they are all elaborate. *Wolf's Clothing* slipped out commercially, and it is commercial films that are good that matter. Monte Blue has never had his due. He was good, we knew in *So This Is Paris*, with the Ruth Miller equally ; and he was good in *The Marriage Circle* but it was Menjou who went ahead. So watch *Wolf's Clothing*. You may find other films like it. There is no knowing what will happen. We have heard a lot about the dawn of a new era in motion-picture entertaining. Well. . . here is Something. It would be well if England took notice. But England is probably not interested psychologically. Still here is one kind of film we want. Warner's made it, last year, and the director is Roy del Ruth ; it bears Lubitsch touches. And it is worth seeing for the handling of the different states of consciousness alone, besides being consistently pleasant to look at.

ROBERT HERRING.

PUNCTUATION MARKS

There was a time when the iris was the latest vogue with cameramen, when it was considered "advanced technique", to prepare the mind of an audience for religious scenes by first letting it glimpse them through the expanding arms of a cross.

An iris appeared on the market which could be adjusted for twenty three, or possibly twenty six, different opening effects. There was a pyrotechnic display of bursting stars ; and of course wedding bells which grew in a second, like the fabulous fungus you see in the illustrations of fairy stories ; even an inverted silhouette of a bridge was stretched across the screen to symbolize a clandestine meeting. I often thought that a complete scenario might be told only with opening effects !

The audience came out of its swaddling clothes before the "industry" and to-day the iris lies on the shelf. So many kindly gestures of over emphasis, it is hardly likely that any friendly hand will ever take it down and reinstate it in its honoured position before the camera ; for the plain circle, with its hard edges, was mechanical, and the circle was the least affected sleight in this too obvious box of tricks.

You remember the mechanical impression it produced in *Taras Bulba* ? People do not think in elastic circles, although thoughts do fade away and new ones gradually take shape within our brain.

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The liberal use of an iris in a film gives the same sensation to the picture goer as a reader would experience if all the punctuation marks in a novel were printed in red ink ! But now that we have said goodbye to the iris with its twenty-three, or possibly twenty-six, different opening effects, we are left with a poor fount of stops.

There are the 'cut' (the direct jump), the 'fade' (the jump by stages) and the 'mix' (two overlapping 'fades'), together with various substitutes for 'fades'. Such as when a character on the screen becomes faint and dizzy and you see the world through his, or her, eyes as it swims to oblivion. Drunkenness, passion, and other violent emotions are often expressed in this manner on the screen by shooting into cylindrical mirrors which are twisted until the objects reflected in them become tangled in a meaningless pattern of blurs. In other words a pseudo 'fade-out'.

Some producers think that an adroit manipulation of these punctuation mark form "the modern technique". There is nothing clever in a series of mixes however long. Why, even here they are so bound by convention that they will not fade out without fading in on the next sequence ! I would suggest a fade out and then a cut, a sort of semi-colon : but hands raised in horror would wave it away, lips almost speechless condemn it as "jerky".

Perhaps a few of the continuity devices are almost punctuation marks.

That dreadful hour glass with the trickling sands ; that bewitched calendar that jumps days with the brazen effrontry

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only comparable to that of the clock whose hands spin round in the most wanton way, all of them I suppose perform something of the duty of stops. Truly they are no more stops than subtitles are action, but still we use them because we are waiting for our young men to discover something more subtle than the 'cut', and more natural than the 'mix', which is after all merely justifiable as a "time saver".

While we are waiting we continue to play with tinting ("the dawn of a new day"), and, when we are more than usually perplexed, to insert futurist passages.

Producers, scenario writers, cameramen. . . .how long ?

OSWELL BLAKESTON.

CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE

IX.

THE THOROUGHLY POPULAR FILM

The moment those crudish, incessantly sparking, never-to-be-forgotten photographs, setting the world in movement before our enchanted eyes, made way for the elaborate simplicities of the aesthetically unsound film play, there descended upon the cinema and all its works a blast of scorn so much

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more withering than any that has fallen to the lot of other kinds of popular entertainment that its sheer extremity calls to the disinterested observer—or, since it is claimed that such is not to be found under the sun, let us say to the relatively disinterested observer—for ampler justification than is supplied in the ravings of the ebullient critics : the desire to nip in the bud a virulently poisonous growth.

For this justification is acceptable only if we can bring ourselves to believe that the prophetic critics whole-heartedly credited their vision of the cinema as embarked upon an orgy of destruction that would demolish the theatre, leave literature bankrupt and the public taste hopelessly debauched. And, if we bring ourselves so to believe we land in the conclusion that these prophets are futility personified. A most uncomfortable conclusion. For surely even an alarmist, even the most wildly rocketting fanatical prophet of disaster must, so long as he is sincere, be something more than a waste product. He is usually a being of acute perceptions and abnormally long sight. A wise, superior person. And if they are right who define wisdom as the darker side of God he is presumably the Devil, and far from futile. But is he ? For with perfect unanimity, from age to age, mankind ignores him and goes its way and none may know whether it is the certainty of neglect that endows the prophet with his fury or his fury that shocks humanity into the averted attitude. What is he therefore ? Where, we are compelled to ask, does he come in ?

Authentic fury is at best a regrettable spectacle. But per-

fect futility is an intolerable spectacle, a spectre at the feast to be exorcised at any cost, even at the cost of snatching from under the nose of the satirist a most succulent morsel. Can it be done ? Can we perhaps transform the wrath of those who fell tooth and nail upon the cinema by interpreting it as a kind of paternal shock, a fury of desire for what was actually in being before their eyes, the thing of beauty promised by the hideous infant ? So to do is not to claim superiority of vision. It is indeed to leave vision in their hands who sensitively shrieked the moment they were hurt —for we, the general public, were not looking for beauty. We were knocked silly by the new birth, were content to marvel at the miracle.

That babe is now a youth, a thing of beauty creating disturbances, precipitating recantations right and left. And though scorn still breathes its would-be withering blast, the blast is directed now to concentrate upon the youth's ill favoured twin, the movie in excelsis. Here at least say the critics you will admit that we were right. And there is no sound nor any that answers. But there is an epithet, a single word, half awestruck and respectful, half hilariously mocking, coined in the largest nursery of the new civilisation, by some citizen of the lower world wandered by chance into alien territory : highbrow.

These contrasted territories are not of course neatly separated. They are linked by a wide dim region inhabited by half-castes whose brows are neither out-size nor yet low. And inhabiting both the upper and the nether aesthetic worlds are the lost and strayed who would be happier elsewhere and

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everywhere are those who could be happy in either were to other fair charmers away. Roughly nevertheless there are the two main territories, the territory of the Films and the territory of the Movies. The films climb, austere and poverty-stricken while the Movies roll in wealth upon the lush floor of the valley. And there is small reason to anticipate any immediate relief for those so narrowly existing on the heights. It is however interesting to speculate as to what would happen if the economic security of the Movies were suddenly withdrawn, what would happen if films were made only by those desiring to make them and ticketless audiences trooped in at ever open doors. Cinemas would be packed, but would the anaesthetic, a psychological immoral unwholesome popular film cease to exist? Would anything cease to exist but that which is at present to be laid to the account of speculation as to what the public wants, what that is to say, it will pay for? Would there not still be the innocent enthusiastic artificer whole-heartedly producing the bad, beloved films? It may be urged that in such a world everyone would be educated away from infantile tastes. But there are limits, even to education. Much may be taken over by one person from another, but there will be no likeness between them unless they are one in spirit. And contemplation of these two worlds the aesthetically adult and the others, reveals a something that a never so generously contrived education is powerless to change: a fundamental difference of approach. There is a larky something behind the veil that offers, on behalf of everything under the sun, a choice of interpretations. It is this

lark, this salt of the journey that drives the truly dogmatic dogmatist to present his dogma as something no intelligent person can deny. But there is always an alternative interpretation. Everything is in pairs, though not everyone is ready to echo the commis voyageur's *hourrah pour la petite différence*.

Let us by all means confess our faith. In this case faith in Art as an ultimate, a way of salvation opposed, though not necessarily contradictory, to other ways of salvation, Religion, Ethics, Science rather existing independently and though aware of them regarding them only as making for the same bourne by different routes. And if at once we have to remind ourselves that life is an art, and the evangelist, moralist and big man of science all imaginative artists, well that is a pleasant holiday for our minds that so easily grow a shade too departmental. Art by all means. Let us live and die in and for it. But when we condemn the inartistic let us beware of assuming aesthetic excellence as always and everywhere and for everyone the standard measure. If we feel we must condemn popular art let us know where we are, know that we are refusing an alternative measure and interpretation of the intercommunications we reject.

As a rule the dogmatic, so rightly dogmatic, aesthete cannot bring himself to glance at the possibility of an alternative measure. So great is his anger and dismay that he is fain to curse and go on cursing. It is however to be remarked of the dogmatic aesthete that he is commonly rather a guardian of the temple than himself a creator. Is not one of the inci-



The subway set from *Wolf's Clothing* (*La Folle Nuit*), Warner production directed by Roy del Ruth. Cameramen, Byron Haskins and Willard Van Enger (see p. 36).



How that state of mind was photographed. The trick was accomplished in another way in a Lubitsch film described by M. Silka in *Les Truquages* for *Close Up* in February.



Wolf's Clothing is excellent in the dance scenes which enable the film to be disguised as a night-club melodrama.



Werner Fuetterer in *Die Abenteuer eines Zehnmarkscheines* (The Adventures of a Ten Mark Note) a Fox-Europa Production, directed by Viertel; a film which has aroused considerable discussion among the followers of *avant garde* films. Fuetterer's great ability is so evident in such films as this, and *Out of the Mist* (Hagar's Sohn), that it is a great pity he is often wasted on inferior comedy.



Anna Mieller as the mother in *The Adventures of a Ten Mark Note*. A flawless performance. The cameramen were Helmar Larski and Robert Babesske, with sets by Walter Reimann.



Imogen Robertson and Werner Fuetterer in the factory. Repairing a broken machine. Note how the lighting is cleverly concentrated on the leading characters. This device is very effective when rightly used.



Walter Frank, as the son. A quite different lighting effect, suggesting a single table lamp in the centre of the room. Amateurs sometimes achieve this effect quite unintentionally !



The mother, Anna Mieller, surrounded by her sympathetic fellow workers. Good, dramatic grouping, carefully placed, yet with none of that effect of facing one direction so often and so wrongly employed.



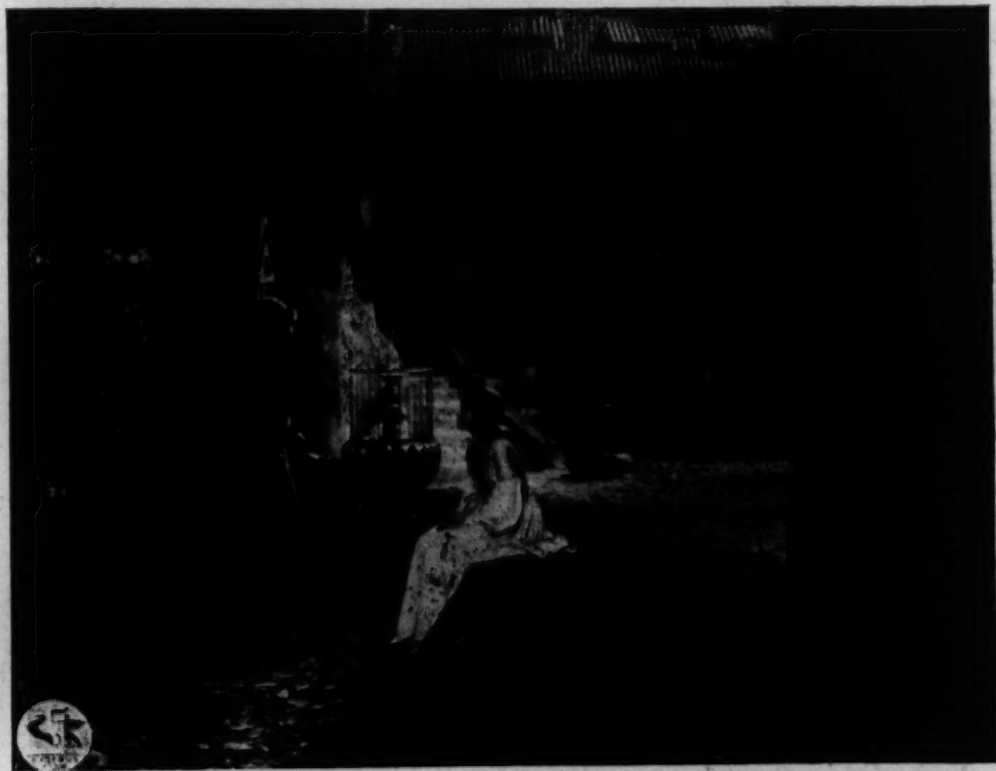
From the *Meister von Nürnberg* (The Meistersingers) that delightful film by Ludwig Berger, made for Phoebus Film. Hans Sachs, the cobbler with Maria Solveg. His performance as the middle-aged, sweet natured citizen, caught suddenly in a love that shakes him to his depths is beautiful beyond description. Hopes, inhibitions, sheer wonder and joy, changing to majestic despair are portrayed with the utmost subtlety and grace.



Maria Solveg and Gustav Fröhlich. Both play charmingly in a charming story. The Nordic beauty of Maria Solveg, a little reminiscent of the quality of Camilla Horn in *Faust*, is well balanced by



This film is superbly lit. Nürnberg lives again in the fourteenth century, made real by lovely sets and authentic atmosphere. Fröhlich, the nobleman, takes apprenticeship with Hans Sachs, the cobbler.



An example of the perfect "exterior" set. Restraint, perspective, balance in light and shade, depth, and suggestion of streets and gossip and quiet activity.

MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF NÜRNBERG



The apprentice has got himself into trouble. Vigorous, tense, and at the same time, so pictorially attractive, this is group composition at its best.

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dental delights of voyaging amongst the records left by the creators the discovery of their quaint tastes in art, their psalms in honour of contemporaries whose long-forgotten work, displaying a perfect inanity, doubtless performed miracles in its own day?

Meanwhile the philistines go their way. They go on cherishing films whose characters, situations and sentiments are said to stand condemned by every known test. And we would like to claim on behalf of even the worst of them, even those that would make a cat laugh and draw tears of agonised protest from a stone, that the condemnation can never be more than relative. We would like to suggest, for example, that the judges live in a world where such characters and situations and sentiments do not exist, in a different dimension of the spirit, and that they have therefore no experience that can illuminate for them the deadly depths. The cause of their horror lies not in what they see but in their way of seeing. It is possible that they are immensely above and beyond the world they condemn. It is certain that they are too far removed from it to get behind its conventions.

Take any of the stock characters of whom it is said that they never existed on land or sea. The poor dear sheik, for example, the man who can kill, can magnificently adore the beloved carried upon his shield high above his head, can dominate, and kneel. Yet he exists. Even in Tooting under a bowler hat. The heroine, the emotional lovely damsel guarding the pearl of price that is but once bestowed. She perhaps is to be met only by those who can create her in her fulness.

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Then the good ending. In some respects the worst criminal of all and most certainly a thing-in-itself. It is demanded, absolutely. They won't we are told, stand anything else. But there is good reason for their refusal, for their stern convention. Is it or is it not, this good ending, the truth, perhaps crudely and wrongly expressed, of life, and their refusal to have it outraged based deeply in the consciousness of mankind ? They welcome even the most preposterously happy ending not because it is in contrast to the truth as known in their own lives, but because it is true to life. The wedding bells, the reconciled family, the reclaiming of the waster, all these things are their artistic conventions and the tribute of love paid to them by the many is a tribute to their unconscious certainty that life is ultimately good.

DOROTHY M. RICHARDSON.

COMMENT AND REVIEW

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THE EDITOR

We are pleased to announce that next month's *Close Up* will contain exclusive stills from the following films :

Bett und Sofa (Trois dans un Sous-sol), the amazing film by Alexander Room, notices of which have already appeared in our pages.

Star of the Sea, the forthcoming Man Ray film, on which he is now working, together with explanatory comments by Mr. Man Ray.

La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc, the almost completed film of Carl Dreyer, on which he has been occupied for more than a year. These unique stills will be from Mons. Dreyer's own personal collection.

La Tragédie de la Rue, the film made by Bruno Rahn just previous to his death, and which is now creating a very great sensation at the Studio des Ursulines in Paris.

L'Auberge en Folie (Kleinstadtsünder), Bruno Rahn's previous film.

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The Postmaster, a Meshrabpom-Russ Production, directed by Jeliaboujski and Moskvine, with Moskvine in the leading role. Recently trade shown in London.

These may be subject to slight alteration and addition, depending on the pressure of space. They will, needless to say, be of the greatest interest, individually and together. Those of *Star of the Sea* and *Jeanne d'Arc* (not to be confused with *La Merveilleuse Vie de Jeanne d'Arc*, the Natan production of Marco de Gastyne) are specially fascinating, since neither they nor the films themselves have yet been seen. Their promise of future delight is very gratifying. We would take this opportunity to call attention to the continued improvement of the illustrated section of *Close Up*, to which the greatest care and attention is given. The high level now reached will be maintained, and no effort will be spared to make the stills given during the year a valuable permanent record of the true representative quality of the world's best films.



Geneva now adds itself to the growing number of places where the small cinema upholds the art of the screen. Under the name of the *Ciné-Club de Genève*, a new undertaking is being launched, similar in principle to the New York Cameo Theatre, and the Vieux Colombier, Studio des Ursulines, Stu-

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dio Vingt-huit etc. of Paris. To state so much explains the whole project. Films will be given which present new method, new ideas, departure from old formulas, and films which mark a place in the history of screen development, in short, such films and presentations as are given in any of the smaller, intelligent cinema theatres. Special attention is to be given to projection and the question of musical accompaniment. Eventually well known directors will arrange to show their own works there.

This is a great encouragement to the so called "avant-garde" workers for the film. More and more of these theatres are appearing, and will eventually, without doubt, form a chain around the world. Let us wish the *Ciné-Club de Genève* every success it deserves.



Moscow is at this moment the scene of a great Congress of the Soviet cinema. The subjects under discussion are :

Organisation of the Russian cinema.

Foreign trade of soviet films.

The question of country cinemas and artistic films.

Recent links have been made with Germany and France, and it is expected to make considerable progress in internal and foreign development. As the average level of the Russian film is so high it is to be hoped that anticipated extensions will prove satisfactory.

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The great scandal of the moment is in connection with *the End of St. Petersburg*, particulars of which are elsewhere in this issue. It appears that sixteen persons in connection with the making of this film have been arrested for fraudulently charging to the Meschrabpom-Russ which made it, all personal expenses ; doctor's, dentists' bills, entertainment expenses, etc., and putting these down to Production Costs. Those arrested include nearly all the principal persons of the firm. It is stated that Darewski, a director, pocketed for himself no less than 11,000 roubles (£ 1,000).

The Soviet cinema will be well represented at the International Cinematographic Exhibition to be held at La Haye from the 14 April to the 15 May. Among the films presented will be *Potemkin*, *The Mother*, and *The End of St. Petersburg*.

HOLLYWOOD NOTES

Dorothy Arzner in her so-far brief career as a director has already won an established reputation and a following of discriminating admirers.

She is but the third of her sex in the history of Hollywood to have achieved sustained success as a director. Lois Weber is the first, and the pioneer ; having entered the field sixteen years ago. Elizabeth Pickett, noted for her successful pictures featuring dogs and horses, is the second ; and now Miss Arzner has won a place on this significantly limited list of

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feminine directors, and promises to become an increasingly important factor in the evolution of cinema technique.

She began her apprenticeship by working as a scenario typist for William de Mille. After that she became a "script holder" for Nazimova—keeping tab on the continuity script of the scenes of a picture as they were shot. The next step in her ambition to become a director was a job as film cutter. Her excellent work in this capacity on Valentino's *Blood and Sand* attracted the attention of James Cruze, who drafted her to edit the film of his masterpiece, *The Covered Wagon*. Following this, she turned to scenario writing, in which her abilities and her marked "picture sense" won further recognition, with the result that the Paramount Company signed her as a director.

Already she has three success to her credit—*Fashions for Women*, *Ten Modern Commandments*, and *Get Your Man*.



The record for economy in film production has been established by a recent picture made in Hollywood. Its total cost was but ninety-seven dollars. It is entitled *The Rhapsody of Hollywood*, and tells the story of the struggles of a cinema extra.

The picture was photographed with an amateur camera in the kitchen and bedroom of S. Vropakitch, a Siberian artist, who collaborated in the making of it with Robert Florey, its director. The forty-five sets in the picture were made of paper, cardboard, cigar boxes and other like inexpensive ma-

terials. A forty-watt lamp served for the lighting. There are but two characters in the photodrama, played by Jules Raucor and Voya Georges.

The picture was previewed in Charlie Chaplin's home before a group of prominent cinema folks. It proved so impressive and so worthy of encouragement, that Douglas Fairbanks turned over his studio cutting room to Florey, to edit the film for exhibition.

Previous to this the record for economy in picture making was held by Josef von Sternberg's *Salvation Hunters*, which was made at a cost of about four thousand dollars. This film was produced with more conventional means than those employed in *The Rhapsody of Hollywood* and had also a larger cast of players. It was hailed by the cognoscente as a gem of artistry, and tho it failed to reach the public because the exhibitors could not recognize it as a money maker, it nevertheless established Von Sternberg as a director and later gave him the opportunity to make his genius known to the world thru his direction of *Underworld*, one of the outstanding films of the past year.

Still another independant work of cinema art, notable alike for its rare quality and its inexpensiveness, is *The Last Moment* by Paul Fejos. This cost but five thousand dollars to produce. Much of its pictorial value lies in the uniqueness of its sets, designed by Rochus Gliese, and in the camera effects achieved by the young Russian cameraman of the picture, Leon Shamroy. It is in five reels and pictures the mental reactions of a dying man in his last moment. Like *The*

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Last Laugh, it has no captions. The entire story is skilfully told in action alone. Whether the public will have an opportunity of seeing it is still in doubt. Its artistry is against it.

Incidentally it is of interest to note that all of the names connected with the three unique films here described are distinctly non-American.



Each year Hollywood makes a poll of the cinema critics of three hundred American newspapers and magazines, to ascertain what in their opinion constitute the best ten pictures of the preceding twelve months. Here is the result of the poll relative to the films of 1927 : *Beau Geste* heads the list. It received the highest number of votes. The other selections follow in the order of the number of votes cast for them—*The Big Parade*, *What Price Glory*, *The Way of all Flesh*, *Ben Hur*, *Seventh Heaven*, *Chang*, *Underworld*, *Resurrection*, and *Flesh and the Devil*.

A similar poll of the exhibitors of the United States gives the following result, reflecting the judgment of the filmgoers as contrasted with that of the critics : *The Way of All Flesh*, *What Price Glory*, *It, Tell it to the Marines*, *We're in the Navy Now*, *Seventh Heaven*, *The Campus Flirt*, *Chang*, *Flesh and the Devil*, and *Resurrection*.



Emil Janning's *The Last Command* was the first picture in which the new incandescent type of lighting was exclusively

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used on the sets. It marked the culmination of a long series of tests with this new method of stage lighting, and promises now to replace the Kliegs. It will not only mean a decided saving in costs, but will also obviate the long-endured annoyance and the ill effect on the eyes of the players occasioned by the blinding arc lamps.



Cecil de Mille's latest picture, *The Godless Girl*, which at this writing is still in production, promises to raise a storm of controversy. Already, following the mere publication of its theme, protests and denunciations are being directed against it. Among the objectors is the Association for the Advancement of Atheism.

C. H.

FILMS RECOMMENDED BY CLOSE UP

FIRST CHOICE.

Die Liebe der Jeanne Ney (*The Loves of Jeanne Ney*).

Ufa. Direction : G. W. Pabst. Manuscript : Leonhardt. Cameraman : F. A. Wagner. Edith Jehanne, Brigitte Helm, Fritz Rasp, Uno Henning, A. E. Licho, Vladimir Sokoloff, in exquisite Pabst scenario. Superb technique, acting, photography. Set in Crimea and Montparnasse. To be seen at all costs. (English release Dec. 31).

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Dona Juana.

Ufa in cinjunction with Elizabeth Bergner's Poetic Film Company. Direction Paul Czinner. Photography by Carl Freund. From the Spanish of Tirzo da Molina. Elizabeth Bergner. Walter Rilla.

Bed and Sofa (Trois dans un Sous-Sol).

Sud film A. G. Ludmila Semenova, Woldemar Fogel and Nicolei Bataloff in new Russian film. The *Potemkin* method applied to domestic drama. Amazing psychology. Uncompromising treatment. Directed by Alexander Room.

The End of St. Petersburg.

Another triumph for Pudowkin, maker of *The Mother*. Meschrabpom-Russ. Film, for De-Ru-Fa. Mss. Natan Zarchi. Photography : Anatolij Golownia. Sets : Koslowski. Played by Baranowskaja, W. Oblensky, as Lededbeff. J. Tschuwileff and A. Tschistiakoff.

The Mother.

From the story by Maxim Gorki. Meschrabpom-Russ-Production. Direction W. Pudowkin. The mother : W. Baranowskajas. The father : Leinstjakoff. The son : Nicolei Bataloff.

The Black Sunday.

Production Goskino. Direction Wiskowski. A second *Potemkin*, continuing the story of the 1905 revolution. If possible more realistic in treatment than *Potemkin*, though less masterly in appeal.

The Postmaster.

Meschrabpom-Russ-Production. From the novel by Pouschkin. Directed by Jeliaboujski and Moskvine, with Moskvine in the leading role, and Ta-

CLOSE UP

marine and M^{me} Malinowskaja. Dynamic beauty with typical Russian quality of realism.

Geiger von Florenz (Impetuous Youth).

Ufa. Direction Paul Czinner. Elizabeth Bergner, Conrad Veidt, Walter Rilla. Photography by Freund. Not to be missed.

Voyage to the Congo.

Neofilm production. A photographic record by Marc Allegret of the journey made by André Gide and himself to unknown regions of the Congo, as told by Gide in his book of the same name. Vivid and unique.

Schinderhannes.

Prometheus-Film super-production. Direction Kurt Bernhardt. Scenario by same with Carl Zuckmayer. Photography Gunther Krampf. Sets by Heinrich Richter. Superb cast including Hans Stüwe, Fritz Rasp, Lissi Arna, Frieda Richard, Albert Steinruck, Kowal-Samborski.

Rien que les Heures and En Rade.

Neofilm productions directed by A. Cavalcanti. Catherine Hessling starred.

La Tragédie de la Rue.

Pantomim-Film. Directed by Bruno Rahn. Photography : Guido Seeber. Asta Nielsen in wonderful role. Oscar Homolka, Hilda Jennings, W. Pittchaw. Marvellous psychological treatment, from the book by William Braun. Presented in France by M. B. Film.

L'Auberge en Folie (Kleinstadtsunder).

Bruno Rahn's film turned just previous to *La Tragédie de la Rue*. Asta

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Nielsen, Maria-Paudler, Hans Wassmann, Max Maximilian, Hermann Picha
Pantomim-Film, presented in France by M. B. Film.

Der Meister von Nurnberg.

Phoebus Film. Directed by Ludwig Berger. Beautiful scenes and lighting. Fröhlich gives charming performance. Maria Solveg brings new grace to the screen.

SECOND CHOICE.

Kopf Hoch Charley (Bigamie).

Ufa. Ellen Richter in marvellous role. Directed by Willi Wolff. Last third of picture falls off.

Moral.

Matador-Film-Verleih. (Universal Pictures Corporation). Ellen Richter and Harry Halm in bright and charming comedy. Directed by Willi Wolf.

Out of the Mist (Hagar's Sohn).

Defu Production. Mady Christians. Werner Fuetterer, Vladimir Sokoloff in drama of German mountains. Beautiful lighting. Directed by Fritz Werdhausen.

Alraune (Mandrake).

Ama Film. From the book by Hanns Heinz Ewers, directed by Henrik Galeen. Fantastic fare for those who like the improbable. Brigitte Helm in title role. Paul Wegener, Ivan Petrowitch, Valeska Gert, Wolfgang Zilzer.

CLOSE UP

Am Rande der Welt (The Edge of the World).

Ufa. Directed by Carl Grune. Sets by Neppach. Brigitte He'm. Albert Steinrück. Plea for pacifism. Fails in this respect, but has beautiful sets and lighting.

White Gold.

De Mille production, directed by William K. Howard. Jetta Goudal, George Bancroft. Admirable restraint in tragic story. Bad comedy touches.

Wolf's Clothing (La Folle Nuit).

A delightful Lubitsch comedy with Monty Blue and Pasty Ruth Miller. More than meets the eye, being in every way as pathological and in the same vein as *Secrets of the Soul*. Only you don't know it unless you know something of psycho-analytical dream symbolism.

Natur und Liebe (Nature and Love).

"Kulturfilm" by Ufa. Made by Dr. Ulrich Schulz.

The King of Kings.

Cecil M. de Mille production. H. B. Warner, Jacqueline Logan, Ernest Torrence, Rudolph and Joseph Schildkraut, Victor Varconi, Wm Boyd.

Sunrise.

Fox Film. Directed by Murneau. Janet Gaynor, Eugene O'Brien.

Luther.

A Cob-Film Production made for the Lutheran Church by Hans Kyser. Has created much dissent among the Roman Catholics. Eugen Klopfer as Luther. Livio Pavanelli and Elsa Wagner.

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Der Weltkrieg 2 Teil (The War through German Spectacles).

Ufa documentaire. Direction : Leo Lasko. Impersonal reconstruction such as *The Somme*, but the War needs a rest.

ENGLISH RELEASES

It would seem that the month of April is not going to be any more exciting in the English cinemas than was March. The following are among the pictures that, one way and another are likely to prove most satisfactory ; this does not include the pre-releases at the London cinemas, details of which can always be found in The Times and Evening News.

Sons of the Sea.

Paramount. Directed by James Cruze. Excellent photography but trying story. Cast includes Charles Farrell, George Bancroft, Wallace Beery, and Esther Ralston.

Rough House Rosie.

Paramount. Directed by Franck Strayer. The adjective for this is brisk as indicated by the title and the cast, which includes Clara Bow and John Miljan (of *Wolf's Clothing*).

Ten Modern Commandments.

Paramount. Directed by Dorothy Arzner. Esther Ralston and Neil Hamilton.

Matrimony.

Isepa. Swedish production, with Lil Dagover. Reviewed in January issue. Distributed by Gaumont. Directed by Gustav Molander.

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The Tragic Hour.

Pittaugla. An Italian film, with Maria Jacobini in a story of Beatrice Cenci that ends happily. For those in search of innocent but sophisticated amusement. Directed by Count Negroni, distributed by Gaumont.

The Isle of June.

Tiffany. A documentaire of the Bahamas. Interesting and lovely shots of under the sea, taken through a glass bottomed boat.

The Way of All Flesh.

Paramount. Directed by Victor Fleming. Emil Jannings, Belle Bennett, Phyllis Haver artistically wringing our hearts. Not what it thinks it is.

The Student Prince.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Directed by Lubitsch Ramon Novarro becomes an actor. Jean Hersholt. Lovely Camera work.

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VALÉRY LARBAUD

(*La Revue de France*)

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Then he shook his throat from the upturned collar of his weatherproof and regained pride. There was a club foot of rock and erosions had continued it in a leg. The family stronghold was set on the instep, wary with watchtowers. It was an attempt at shelter from Atlantic gales, seen only obliquely from the sea, but the wind made arcs and tormented it with catcalls. . . . Night set off across the sea like an expedition. Something would happen. Rising, he felt the land shake under impact. Tide crashed against his feet. " . . . leads to an immense climax :

"Get that woman out of here," said Mannering, "someone take her away and attend to her." Mrs. Mannering bowed down her head and wept terribly. She gained control at once. Aggie Scott was screaming down the corridor, more and more faintly, "it was an accident, my finger nail. My finger nail. . . ." A grim impassivity fell upon the room. The candles guttered frenziedly in strong draughts." an absorbing and tragic tale, capturing the true island sense of sea and weather and emotions "on this island hybrid and unfeasible." Price 7 shillings and sixpence.

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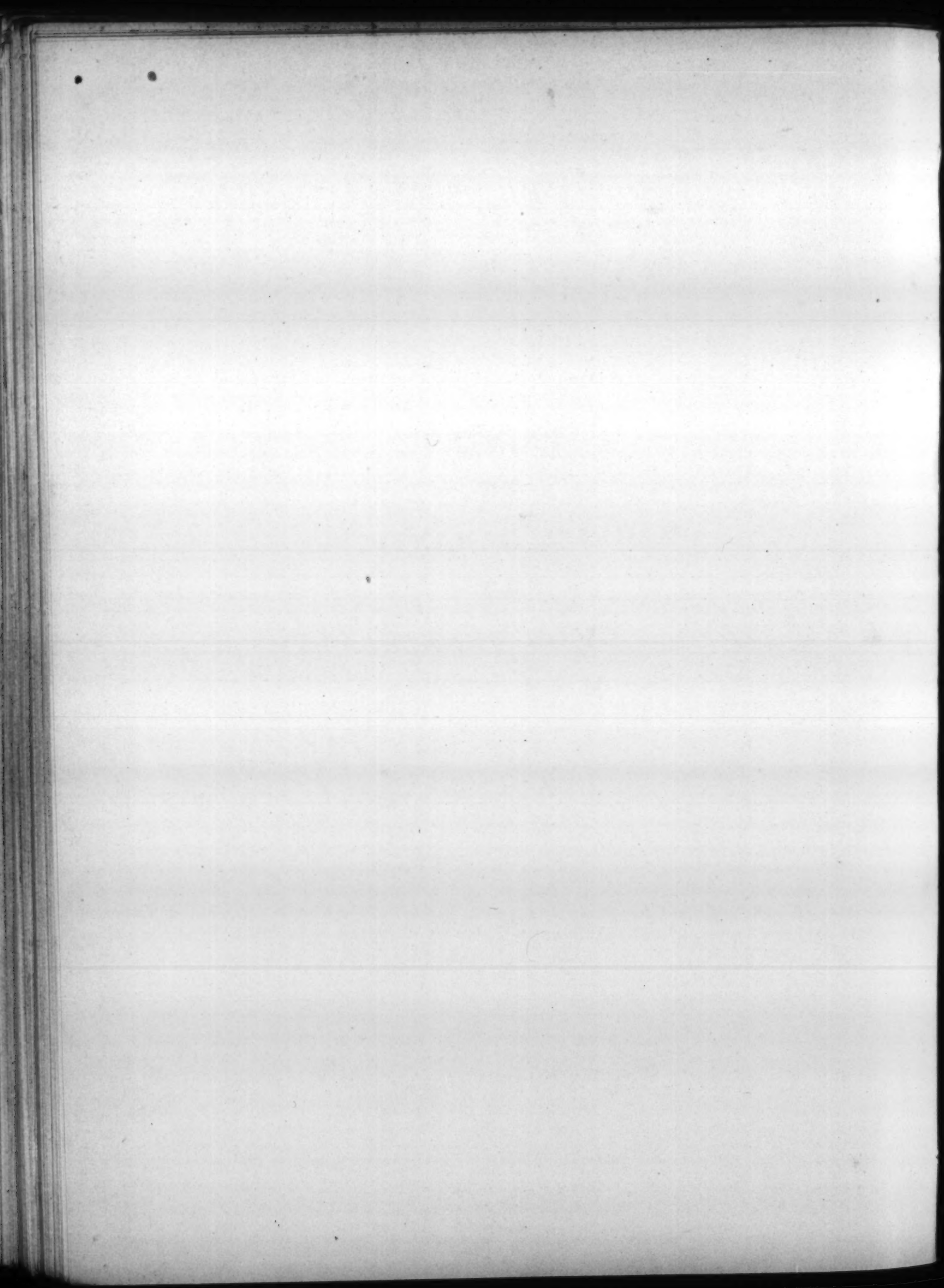
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A. Cavalcanti (seen kneeling under the camera) directing a close up for his film *En vade*. The camera man is J. A. Rogers, now working with Dupont. The sailor is Tommy Bourdel one of the best French movie actors.

Photo : M. Allégret